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IN MEMORY  
OF  
ROBERT CURTIS OGDEN

TRUE FRIEND  
PATRIOTIC CITIZEN  
UNOFFICIAL STATESMAN  
CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN

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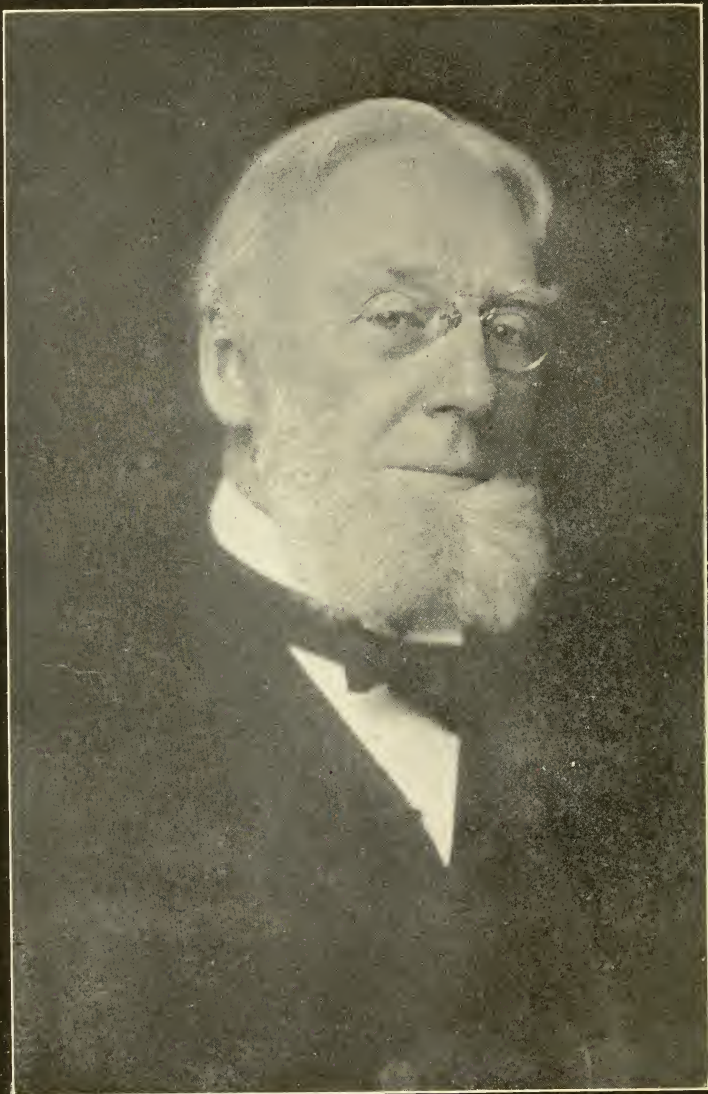
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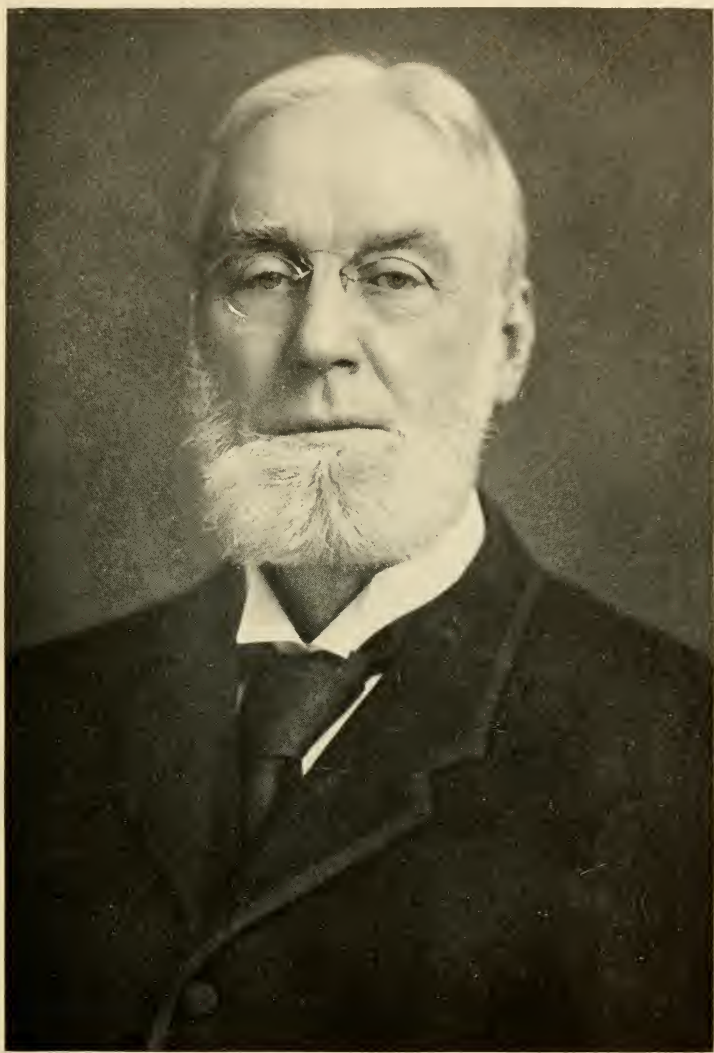






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ROBERT CURTIS OGDEN



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Fries, Henry E

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## PREFACE

Everlasting and ever-widening will be the influences set in motion in the South, during the crucial period of its educational reconstruction, by the Southern Education Board, the Conference for Education in the South and their coöperative agencies. The inspiring, informing, and directing spirit of all these was Robert C. Ogden. For his generous aid in money, in time, in thought, in heart, so unsparingly and so modestly given, for his helpful sympathy, his stimulative advice and encouragement, and all his unselfish service during a long period of years to the cause of education in the South for both races, the people of the South, and especially the people of North Carolina, owe him a debt of love and gratitude.

This booklet has been prepared by grateful friends as a memorial to him, as a medium of information to our people about his life and character and his work for them, and as a means of affording those who desire it an opportunity to express their appreciation of his services by the purchase of this booklet, the proceeds from the sale of which will be applied to aiding a part of

the educational work of the South in which he was deeply interested.

Through the work which he inspired and directed, through the funds which he contributed and raised for financing the Educational Campaigns for local taxation, and for all other sorts of school improvement in North Carolina and other states, Robert C. Ogden was a benefactor of every child, every teacher, every citizen of this state.

I heartily commend to all this booklet and the purpose for which it has been prepared and to which the proceeds of its sale will be devoted. I sincerely trust that there will be a hearty response from all our people, and I earnestly bespeak the assistance of all superintendents of schools, teachers, and children in the sale of so good a book for so good a purpose. It is the inspiring story of the life and work of a wise, patriotic philanthropist in education.

J. Y. JOYNER,

State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

*Raleigh, N. C., February 8, 1916.*

IN COMMEMORATION OF  
ROBERT C. OGDEN

The Southern Education Board approaches with hesitation and with reverence the duty of placing on its records a tribute to the memory of Robert C. Ogden. No words can fittingly express the sentiments of respect and regard felt toward him by the members of this body, or their estimate of his value as a man and as a citizen. To an extent unusual in any organization he incarnated the whole Board. He was its organizer and its only President during the years of his life. It was his high conception of duty and privilege that held the Board to its task and rendered the results of its labors so remarkably successful. He mapped the course, he led the way, he inspired each follower, and by his life and death he consecrated the work.

A review of the years passed shows that the activities of this Board have been directed to various ends—to educational campaigns that have aroused one state after another, to

needed changes in educational legislation, to general improvement in rural schools, and to the elevation of rural life. Rarely has any work so far-reaching been originated and carried through with so small an outlay of material resources. The wisdom of those who have directed these activities has been justified by wonderful results. Mr. Ogden was responsible for the selection of these workers. His insight recognized the tasks and chose the agents best suited for their accomplishment. By the power of his personal influence he held the Southern Board together, and directed the energies of busy men to the unselfish duties which he assumed. That same wonderful personality impressed itself upon the nation at large. Through the Conference for Education in the South he touched the great hearts of the North and the South, and put upon the nation's conscience a universal need. All this was done so quietly, so simply, that we wonder still at the results. Not by persuasion, not by fanatical insistence, but by the contagion of his own personal devotion, he rallied men from every section, from every walk or station in life, rich and poor, high and lowly, white and black, to the cause which he advocated.

The South owes him a peculiar debt. He



*Photograph by Mr. Edgar Gardner Murphy*

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### **SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHERN EDUCATION BOARD**

Standing, left to right: Commissioner P. P. Claxton, U. S. Bureau of Education; Rev. Geo. S. Dickerman, New Haven, Conn.; President A. E. Alderman, University of Virginia; Henry E. Fries, Winston-Salem, N. C.; Secretary David F. Houston, U. S. Department of Agriculture; Ambassador Walter H. Page; President S. C. Mitchell, Delaware College; Hon. Sydney J. Bowie, Birmingham, Ala.; and Frank R. Chambers, New York City.

Sitting, left to right: George Foster Peabody, New York City; Robert Curtis Ogden, New York City; Wallace Buttrick, Secretary of General Education Board, New York City.





understood the temper and temperament of its people. He admired its strength, and was kind in his judgment of weaknesses. He understood its problems and sought a rational solution of them. Not by patronizing aloofness and cold counsel, but by personal aid and warm sympathy, he made his contributions to the uplift of a whole nation.

Through his efforts our national life has been strengthened, brothers once estranged have become united, service feebly performed has been rendered efficient, and racial coöperation has taken the place of racial conflicts.

Robert C. Ogden was a man of high ideals and far-reaching vision. To great purposes he consecrated his life with a devotion unsurpassed. By the compelling power of personal friendship he lifted others to the high plane on which he lived, and joined other hands to his in noblest service.

Therefore, we, the members of the Southern Education Board, dedicate to him these pages in our records. The written words but feebly attest our love and our loss. The record of his life is the best part of our institutional history. His memory is an inspiration, the consciousness of his continued love and friendship our comfort still, his work the foundation on which we must forever build. Who seeks his

monument will find it both in national achievement and in the consecration of many hearts.

To the God of the nations we render thanks for the life and for the memory of Robert C. Ogden.

Edwin A. Alderman  
A. P. Bourland  
Sidney J. Bowie  
Wallace Buttrick  
Frank R. Chambers  
Philander P. Claxton  
Charles W. Dabney  
George S. Dickerman  
J. H. Dillard  
Henry E. Fries  
Hollis B. Frissell  
John M. Glenn  
David F. Houston  
J. H. Kirkland  
S. C. Mitchell  
Walter H. Page  
George Foster Peabody  
Wickliffe Rose  
Albert Shaw

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

### ROBERT CURTIS OGDEN

Born in Philadelphia, Penna., June 20, 1836. M. A., Yale, 1902; LL. D., Tulane, 1903; L. H. D., Union College, New York, 1909. Married Ellen Elizabeth Lewis, of Brooklyn, March 1, 1860 (died December 3, 1909). Member of the firm of John Wanamaker, 1885-1907. Retired April 1, 1907. President of the Board of Trustees of Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia. President of the Directors of Union Theological Seminary, New York. Elected President of the Conference for Education in the South, June, 1900; elected President of the Southern Education Board, April, 1901; continued in both offices until his death, at Kennebunkport, Maine, August 6, 1913.

Dr. H. B. Frissell thus writes:

On a spring day in 1860, when Robert Ogden was twenty-four, an impulsive, keen-thinking youth of twenty-one, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, the son of American missionaries to the Hawaiian Islands, called on him with a letter of introduction. These two high-spirited young men, a few years out of boyhood, joined hands then in a friendship that lasted thirty-three years, until the death of the younger, in 1893.

Young Armstrong left Williams College to fight for the Union, was given command of a negro regiment, at the close of the war became agent of the Freedman's Bureau in Virginia, and in 1868 taught fifteen negro

students to make bricks and read books on an old plantation two miles from Old Point Comfort, Va.

Thus began the Hampton Institute, and thus, in 1874, Mr. Ogden received and accepted an invitation to become a Trustee of a far-reaching experiment in education. For forty years he was Trustee of Hampton, and for twenty years he was President of the Trustees. The school grew from the old plantation house with fifteen students and two teachers to an industrial village of 140 buildings along the shores of Hampton Roads, where 900 men and women of two races are trained as teachers, tradesmen, and farmers to serve and lead their people.

It was through Mr. Ogden's interest in Hampton and the education of the negro that this man of business and ideals came to understand the heavy burdens and peculiar educational problems of the South. Fifteen years ago Mr. Ogden threw himself into the great campaign of the Southern leaders to bring new life and light into the South; the work of building up old Commonwealths.

In the early nineties Southern leaders of education were laboring earnestly in separate states to bring the light to all the people. But not until the spring of 1898 was there an alliance of these rebuilders of old Commonwealths.

It became clear in 1898, at this first Capon Springs conference, that to accomplish the greatest good in the Southern educational field the North and South must enter into closer relations. Northern delegates felt that

the South had been bearing heroically a heavy burden in the establishment of a double set of common schools for the two races within its borders, and that since the Federal Government had given the South practically no assistance, the North should help in a fraternal spirit, not to meddle or interfere, but to "stand by" as fellow-citizens of a common country.

This feeling, first voiced by Mr. Ogden and others in the leisurely atmosphere and amid the quiet beauty of Capon Springs, continued to be the undercurrent of the Conference for Education in the South through the sixteen years of its existence, whether meeting in other quiet country places or amid the bustle and rush of large cities like Richmond and Memphis.

The battle cry of the conference became "a common school education for the children of all the people," and the meetings were given to practical planning for the accomplishment of this colossal task.

The genius of Mr. Ogden, early elected President of the Conference, fused and directed the ardent enthusiasm of the men of two sections for the betterment of the South until his death. Into his task the leader of the conference threw himself heart and mind. At his own expense and a cost wholly disproportionate to his means, Robert C. Ogden took trainload after trainload of Northern men and women, year after year, to the South, until most of the Southern States had heard a message full of help and hope.

To Winston-Salem, N. C., to Athens, Ga., Richmond,

Va., Birmingham, Ala., Columbia, S. C., Lexington, Ky., Pinehurst, N. C., Memphis, Tenn., Atlanta, Ga., Little Rock, Ark., Jacksonville, Fla., and Nashville, Tenn., came the men who, with ever-increasing effect, generaled the long battle front of educational advance throughout the South.

## ROBERT CURTIS OGDEN\*

### AN APPRECIATION

BY EDWIN A. ALDERMAN

President of the University of Virginia

[*From the Southern Workman, January, 1916*]

In the summer of 1901 I received a telegram from Robert C. Ogden asking me to come to him for a conference at his summer home at Kennebunkport, Maine. I accepted the invitation and found awaiting me there not only Mr. Ogden but my old friend and colleague, Charles D. McIver of North Carolina. This meeting was my first acquaintance with Mr. Ogden, and my first reunion for a long period with my old co-worker, McIver. Mr. Ogden was then well past the meridian of life, but abounding in physical vigor and as eager an idealist as ever dreamed of a better world. The impression he made upon me then is the same I have of him tonight, save that it is deepened and heightened by experience of him and affection for him. Here was a man vital in body, pure of spirit, keen of mind, happy of heart, and utterly given over to thought of unselfish helpful-

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\*Address at the Ogden Memorial Meeting, Richmond, Virginia, Friday evening, November 26th, under the auspices of the Coöperative Education Association of Virginia.



ness to individuals and masses. He bundled us both into a canoe and carried us, with a swift, sure stroke, up the deep, quiet river. Under the pines, upon a hillside by the river, we spent the day discussing the organization, the purpose, and the personnel of the Southern Education Board—an expansion of the old Capon Springs Conference made remarkable by the participation of men like Bishop Dudley, J. L. M. Curry, William L. Wilson, Barnes Sears, Mr. Ogden himself, and many other great names.

In the autumn of that year the Board was formally organized, and its great spiritualizing adjunct, the Conference for Education in the South, became more active. Mr. Ogden became the President of the Board and the supervising director of the Conference; and under the guidance of his insight and enthusiasm the Board entered upon a remarkable career of national usefulness.

The Southern Education Board was a natural offspring of the activities of the Peabody Foundation. The great need of the time in Southern life was the formation of a powerful public opinion for popular education. Public opinion, under any form of government, in such great social movements, must be continually strengthened and enlightened. This Board took up that task, and may be said to have accomplished in its short life a great total with the smallest expenditure of money of any agency of our day. So untechnical and inspirational were the influences, that it is difficult to describe them in any brief space. It had no funds to



distribute to educational institutions. It sought to ally itself with state and local agencies. Its purpose was steadily, not to obtrude, but to efface itself in the interest of the people. Its first principle was a profound belief that ignorant masses, white or black, cannot be safely left in the body of a democracy. Its working theory was a perfect confidence in the self-reliance and creative powers of the people of the South. Its supreme desire was to help a great overburdened people, struggling with a terribly difficult group of problems, but proud, and rightly determined to mould their institutions after their own way and with their own means. Its high method was faith in the solvent power of sympathy and friendship and accurate and common understanding between good men and women of all sections of a united country.

Perhaps the chief practical function of the Board was the winning of rural communities to a larger policy of local taxation for school purposes. In the states where the unit of taxation had been the county, assistance was given to the "county campaign," the representatives of the Board helping in the organization of public meetings, defraying the actual expenses of effective speakers, creating and circulating the literature of the subject, and coöperating with the local educational leaders in an effort to secure an affirmative popular vote on the question of a larger local tax for the benefit of the schools.

Where the unit of taxation was the school district,

the same methods were employed; the Board worked here, as always, solely through the authorized, accepted agencies of the locality concerned. These local campaigns powerfully affected the general school legislation of the state. State funds—heretofore the chief resource of the Southern school system—rapidly increased, in a number of states, from fifty to three hundred per cent. Local organizations of women for the improvement of rural schoolhouses were established; or, in cases where such activities already existed, they were strengthened and equipped for still larger work. The movements for the formation of school libraries, for the development of high schools, for agricultural education, and for manual training all received recognition and reinforcement; Southern governors became educational experts and pioneers. Southern legislators debated popular education and appropriated two-fifths of their total income for public education. The South became the inspiring, dynamic, educational section of the country. In short, it may be claimed that during the decade of the active existence of the Board a stupendous educational awakening went forward in state and nation.

The Board never assumed, nor did its unselfish president ever imagine, that this great social impulse owed its origin to the activities of this Board, for the movement had become irresistible before its formation: Men like Robert E. Lee, William H. Ruffner, J. L. M. Curry, Atticus G. Haywood, and Calvin H. Wiley had given it birth; but in stimulating public opinion, in arousing

popular enthusiasm, and in achieving unity of purpose anywhere, the Board found a part to play and played it well with power and decisiveness. In every state, from the Gulf to the Potomac, the educational leaders of that time will declare that their plans were helped forward by the Board and the Conference; and throughout the whole nation its methods and impulses were copied and modified for the advancement of popular education in the Republic.

The essential idealism of American life is nowhere given nobler proof than in the fact that the leader of this piece of democratic efficiency and volunteer statesmanship was an American business man, not trained in the academies, but clear of purpose, strong of vision, and gifted with a genius for friendship and a capacity to see clearly the path ahead. Mr. Ogden had great capacity for affairs, but he will endure as a figure of humanitarian enthusiasm, a friend of good causes, a struggler for the common good; and by the right of these forces he has written his name along with such names as George Peabody on the roll of the great constructive forces in the educational development of the country. He achieved this result, not by giving vast sums of money as Mr. Peabody did, though he gave very freely of what he had; nor by building great institutions, like Armstrong or McIver, nor by administering great trust funds, like Sears and Curry. He achieved it by giving himself wholly to a great idea and a great purpose. The great idea was a belief in the self-reliance,

the justice, the essential wisdom of the people of the South, in the handling of the most difficult and delicate educational problems presented for solution to any people in any time.

The great purpose was the purpose to understand his brethren of the South, to coöperate with them in their work, and to help bear such part of their burdens as they would permit, because they were national burdens and belonged, of right, on the shoulders of the whole nation. His fame, therefore, is the fame of an apostle of coöperation and service; his genius, the genius of interpretation to each other of men and sections; his charm, the demeanor of an earnest gentleman to whom life and living are serious, beautiful, and reverential things; his manner, that of an age now gone which greatly exalted manners and bred a quality of behavior that seems archaic in our busier age, but which was very beautiful and distinguished, and by its passing has robbed life of something that sweetened and glorified it.

It is fitting that the educational forces of the country should raise a memorial to Robert Ogden. It is very fitting that this memorial should be placed at Hampton Institute. The creative spirit of Samuel Chapman Armstrong first touched him to higher issues and transformed the virile young merchant into a student of society and a lover of his kind. The problems arising from the presence of the African in American life first awakened in him the statesman's vision. He saw in Hampton Institute the greatest and the sanest experi-

ment station for the training of a backward race yet devised by the wit of men. He believed its deepest object was not only to help backward people to a better economic life, to breed in them racial self-respect, to endow them with skill of hand and a conception of clean home life and good citizenship, but, in a large way, to protect our national life from deterioration and inefficiency. He very firmly believed that there was but one thing to do with any human being of any race in the world, and that thing was to give him a chance, by training him wisely for his day and need. Like Curry he held to the faith that ignorance is no remedy for anything. His loyalty to Hampton was not whimsical, emotional, or sectional loyalty to the training of one race alone, but loyalty to the Republic and Democracy and to one method of freeing the Republic from a perilous incubus of ignorance and weakness.

The chiefest weapon of Robert Curtis Ogden in all his record of achievement was absolute self-forgetfulness. I have never known a man intimately who won such fine pleasure and happiness through complete self-surrender. He was modest, but conscious of leadership; patient, but vigilant; hopeful, but very busy and dauntless. He confronted all difficulties with a cheerful face and a stout heart, and out of his whole life issued a serene and contagious faith in the ultimate good intentions of his fellow-men that sets him apart as a genuine helper to his kind, a friend of men—a great democrat, whose constituency was the world.

## A LIFE WELL LIVED\*

We turn back today with affection and honor to this life and ask it to teach us how to live and how to die. We hear in these days much of the spirit of commercialism and materialism in our modern world, as though business life were a form of warfare and piracy, where the unscrupulous win and the honorable lose. But here was a man of large and exacting cares, buying and selling, organizing and building, with energy and foresight, yet maintaining among these tumultuous obligations an interior quietude of spirit which illumined his very countenance, so that—as was said of Moses—“he wist not that his face shone.” Laurence Oliphant once said that the greatest need of England was the need of a spiritually minded man of the world—a man who could live in the world, sharing its responsibilities, accepting its methods, yet detached from it and superior to it, as one who makes it an instrument of spiritual ends. Well, here was just such a man, needed in America as much as in England—a spiritually minded man of the world, knowing his world and mastering it, yet

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\*Selection from Address of Dr. Francis Greenwood Peabody, Ogden Memorial Service, Central Presbyterian Church, New York, October 26, 1913.



more intimately knowing himself and mastering himself, with the power of a spiritual mind; gaining the world without losing his own soul.

First: Keep business itself clean. Purify the sources. Prepare to meet thy God, not on some distant Judgment Day, but each week, downtown. No prodigality in the giving of money can atone for criminality in the making of money. The elementary test of the Christian character under the conditions of the modern world is not in one's giving but in one's getting, not in one's church but in one's office.

The second teaching is this: Attach yourself to a great cause, lift your eyes from your desk, enlarge your horizon, live in a large world, know how the other half lives. This is not only the way of philanthropy, it is the way of self-discovery. It is not only the helping of others, but the saving of one's own soul. The self-centered life inevitably shrivels; the self-forgetting life naturally expands, until modest capacities and limited gifts may bloom into leadership, power, and even genius under the sunshine of a compelling and expanding cause. That was what happened to this man. The consecration of his powers enriched and enlarged them. The great cause created in him wisdom and statesmanship, and even touched his lips with eloquence. He was among us as one that served and that proved his right to lead us all.

There remains, finally, the condition of efficiency which was most marked in our friend. It was the

power of a simple, uncomplicated, and consistent religious faith. Speaking of Armstrong in the first Founder's Day address at Hampton, Mr. Ogden said, "Only upon the high spiritual theory can we explain the power of the life which we are now considering." The same high spiritual theory is the key which unlocks his own character. It was said of Count Zinzendorf, the protector of the Moravians, that he could ride the wildest horse in his father's stable, and when asked how he could be at once a Pietist and an athlete, answered, "Only he to whom earthly things are indifferent can be their master." The control of the physical was a witness to the spiritual. Courage came from above. The spiritual mind dominated the animal world. There was the same source of tranquillity, assurance, and patience in the life of our friend. He had surrendered himself, and so he had found himself. He came not to do his own will, but the will of Him who sent him, and so his own will grew firm and sure. He was indifferent to power and fame, and so he won the greater distinction of being loved and mourned. Crushing sorrows met him, but his own burden grew lighter because he took on himself the burdens of other lives. It was written of old, "He hath made all things beautiful in their time; also he has set Eternity in their hearts." That is the story of this modern life. Each event was beautiful to him in its time because he had set Eternity in his heart. He had heard the great word, "I am come not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give my



life a ransom for many"; but it was, to him, not a summons to sacrifice and resignation so much as a call to privilege and joy.

I shall never forget going one day into the great business establishment which he had created, and mounting from floor to floor through the busy crowds until I came at last to a little upper room. There, above the noises of trade, a dozen of the busiest of business men sat in quiet deliberation concerning great projects of national welfare, and interchanged their dreams of the better America which they saw, not by sight, but by faith. It was a symbol of religion in the twentieth century, of a faith known by its works, of a service which was perfect freedom, of the spiritualization which is still possible for men of the world. One thought of an upper room above the bustle of Jerusalem, where the Master said, "I have given you an example that ye should do even as I have done to you." Nor was the Master himself absent; for it was in His name that these men met, and it was to them also that He said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

## SELECTION FROM ADDRESS

BY SAMUEL CHILES MITCHELL, PH.D.\*

President of the Medical College of Virginia

The projectile power of personality was happily set forth in the results of the labors for the South of Robert C. Ogden. It is instructive to study his plans for the improvement of public schools, for the betterment of farming, for the enrichment of rural life, for racial adjustment and social progress.

Mr. Ogden's personality was contagious. He became a centre in organizing constructive friendships. When he began his labors in the South for universal education there were isolated workers in the several states unacquainted with one another, without any large view of the general task, and without an interchange of common experience. His presence instantly caused all of these workers to leap together, just as atoms form a new combination in the laboratory induced by the presence of a single new element. He had a rare faculty for the discovery of men and of their aptitude for social leadership.

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\*An address at the Ogden Memorial Service at the Central Presbyterian Church, New York, October 26, 1913.

The great thing, however, about Mr. Ogden was not merely his sagacity as to the way in which to do the things that were really worth while in the national life, unerring as his sagacity was in the choice of men and measures. It was not even his passionate love for people, and especially people disadvantaged and in need. But the great thing in him was his faith in the capacity of men to grow, his faith in the essential goodness of the human heart, his faith in the subtle potency of reason, when trained and rightly directed—in a word, his faith in man under the influence of truth and love. It was this structural faith that sustained him in his great labors, that enabled him to overcome all barriers and that swept him forward with a purpose that moved majestically, like a force in nature.

I can never forget the first time that I saw him, when he stood upon the platform at Hampton Institute, giving a fatherly message to the graduating class of Indian and colored youth that stood before him. He seemed to breathe into the characters of those people his own large spirit of faith, encouragement, aspiration, and spirit of social service.

His philanthropy took naturally the form of a structural purpose; namely, to achieve for the South through the training of children and through the process of social growth, results which all other means, including war and politics, had been unable to produce.

I believe that it was given to a business man to hit upon a sounder principle for economic progress, racial

adjustment, and national integration than was vouchsafed to any politician or general in the annals of America. The conquests of education alone are enduring. "One former is worth a dozen reformers." What a lurid glare is shed upon the follies and wastes of War and Reconstruction in view of the beneficent changes wrought by these silent forces of light and love. Never was more finely revealed the regenerative impulse in the heart of man than the signal results of this educational movement through the power of public opinion. In the case of millions of children, Mr. Ogden "thinks in their brain, throbs in their heart, speaks in their conscience, and makes their will leap like a resolute muscle to its task in fulfilling the will of God."

He was by instinct a leader, a big brother of mankind, yet he delighted to follow. In many instances he took up other men's tasks and pushed them to a completion hardly dreamed of by the men who first conceived the enterprises. Like a master builder, he made a wise use of all materials at hand. Mr. Ogden's sympathies grasped the situation in the South, emerging slowly from the waste of war and sorrow of defeat. He discerned at a glance what an aroused public opinion could do for progress through the common schools. His strategy consisted, not in money, not in the creation of new agencies, not in the attempt to impose ideas and institutions upon a people, but in his belief in the ability of the people of the South to do for themselves the things necessary for their own well-being. He coveted the

IN THIS CHAPEL WAS HELD  
THE FOURTH CONFERENCE FOR  
EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH.

APRIL 18-19-20 1901

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WALTER H. PAGE. J. L. M. CURRY.

The first Memorial erected to Mr. Robert C. Ogden in the Southern States  
Salem Academy and College, Winston-Salem, N. C.

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WALTER H. PAGE. J. L. M. CURRY.



privilege of sympathizing with the South in accomplishing these great social ends and in sharing and strengthening the impulses of the men who were bent on their accomplishment.

He had no ambition to be the founder of an institution. His name is identified with a movement, and not with an institution. He preferred to vitalize the nascent common school system. He integrated all his efforts with what the towns, counties, and states had already undertaken. The wisdom of this plan has been abundantly justified. He multiplied himself a million times by inciting the whole citizenship to get underneath the task and to energize the schools as a means of social progress. The principle upon which he thus acted is of wide and present application. Only the state, through the power of public taxation, is equal to the task of training all the children for the duties of citizenship in democracy. The main thing is to stimulate the people of a community to do well by their own schools. The principle of local taxation, the necessity of community control, and the power of public opinion were the three prime factors in his plan of educational campaign for the South. The fruitfulness of his labors sprang naturally out of the force inherent in these three principles. He built, therefore, not for a day, but for the ages. Instead of being able to point to a single school that bore his name, he could point to state systems of schools into which he had breathed the energy of his own great personality.



Mr. Ogden's career was as a golden clasp binding together the North and South in sympathy and coöperation for the integrity of national life. He enlisted throughout the North men and women of initiative as co-workers in the tasks of the South. With him this noble band of friends would make an annual pilgrimage to the Conference for Education, study the facts in the Southern situation for themselves, and strike friendships there of enduring and fruitful character. It is not too much to say that Mr. Ogden in this way changed radically the viewpoint of the North with reference to the South, rendering editors, publicists, and educators in the North sympathetic with the struggle of the South and eager to aid on all occasions the forces there making for practical righteousness. These kindly interlacing influences of the North and South have perhaps done more toward reuniting the sections in a common purpose and like-mindedness than any other single agency in the history of our country since the Civil War.

Thus, in these two ways, Mr. Ogden's efforts in behalf of public education have a distinctly national bearing: First, by stirring to the very depths the mind of the South through the discussion of the vital facts involved in democratic education; and, secondly, by knitting the sympathies of the leaders in the North and in the South, revealing their oneness in the fellowship of social service and in a common purpose embracing the good of the whole country. Never more happily was illustrated the meaning of that Scripture, "A little



child shall lead them," for it was the efforts to open for the child the door to a larger life that brought about these signal results in social progress and national unification.

Mr. Ogden gave a new interpretation to the meaning of American citizenship. He had a scent for human need. He socialized his life and energies. Friendship was the essence of his working programme. His hospitality was kingly, and the list of his friends would make up the honor roll of America. There can be no pessimism in the presence of such an example. All problems dissolve as retreating clouds before the outreach of such a personality. So long as exalted citizenship in the private walks of life reveal the sanity and sacrifice that characterized Robert C. Ogden, there can be no doubt as to America's fulfilling the moral expectancy of mankind. "The character of the citizen is the strength of the State."

## ROBERT C. OGDEN

### THE PHILANTHROPIST\*

He brought to the task a business genius, a calm and quiet persistence of purpose, a clear judgment, a Christian character of serene purity, and an utter lack of self-exploitation.

We are not able now fully and justly to estimate the value of his work for the education of the negro and for education generally in the South, because he was taken from us in the doing. We do not know much of what he has done, but we do know its great value. His plans, however, like those of wise men generally, were so broad, his look into the future was so extended, his ideas were so sane and practical, that not for many years yet can we weigh all the good that he planned and did, in its ultimate effect upon a section of this country whose social history has been full of difficult problems, and for a race of which this people must be trustees and guardians for many decades to come.

It was my good fortune to be associated with Mr.

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\*Selection from an Address of Ex-President William Howard Taft, LL.D., Ogden Memorial Services, First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, November 9, 1913.

Ogden in several of the many projects for the betterment of the negro and of education, which claimed and had his interest and his effective support. When I speak of the elevating effect that association with him had, I speak from personal knowledge. And the same thing is true when I speak of his clear-sightedness, his very great experience and knowledge, and his most valuable judgment on what was practical and what was not, in the objects to be pursued to bring about a betterment of educational and social conditions in the South.

I cannot close without an expression of the personal love that the beautiful character and charming personality of Mr. Ogden awakened in every one who was privileged to come in contact with him. His sense of duty as a citizen was not in the slightest degree dimmed or made less strong because he had also a wider sympathy for mankind; but there was united in him with energy and a knowledge of how to do things a sweet reasonableness, an elevated enthusiasm, and a sane courage and hope that one can never forget. He represented in the highest sense the real Christian gentleman, and it is no reflection on those whom he has left to say that it will be many years before the world will look upon his like again.



## TRIBUTES

BY

Dr. P. P. Claxton

Miss J. E. Davis

David H. Greer

Edgar Gardner Murphy

John W. Fries

Edwin A. Alderman

Walter H. Page

S. G. Atkins

H. E. Fries



## TRIBUTES

Concerning the Winston-Salem Conference, Dr. P. P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education, writes:

The Conference for Education in the South, which began its work in a small way at Capon Springs two years before the beginning of this century and held its first public meeting at Winston-Salem, N. C., in the second year of the century, has been beyond question one of the most important single factors in the remarkable awakening and progress which I have here briefly recounted. Some day, when the history of this movement has been adequately written, this will be seen more clearly than is now possible. We are still too close to the events to catch the perspective.

In Mr. Ogden's party were many men and women whose names were known to us and to all the world for their achievements, but whose faces were unfamiliar to most of us. From the South came men who in their states and local communities were known for their interest in education and for their leadership in the new movement for democracy in education. When these men and women from the North and the South met

through those three days in the North Carolina "Twin Cities" to learn to know each other and to discuss the problems of education in the South as seen from their different points of view, the hour of opportunity had struck. From that hour to this the movement in the interest of which these people had come together has gone steadily on, with increasing momentum and increasing definiteness of purpose and aims.

Miss J. E. Davis also writes:

It was at Winston-Salem that, for the first time in this Conference, addresses were made by public school superintendents, and it was at this meeting also, at the suggestion of Dr. Dabney, of the University of Tennessee, who had made a serious study of the educational situation in the South and had presented a startling array of figures, that an Executive Board was formed to conduct a campaign of education in the South. This was the beginning of the Southern Education Board; and its natural outgrowth, the General Education Board, was incorporated during the following winter.

As one recalls the inspiring meetings at Winston-Salem it is hard to decide what elements most contributed to the inspiration. Beyond the setting itself, which lent not a little charm, perhaps it was the eager pressing forward of many men of many minds toward one supremely important goal. "Everything in the South," said Dr. Dabney, "waits upon the general education of the people." Mr. Ogden showed so well,



in the following words, the attitude of his associates that they deserve to be widely quoted, being as applicable now as then to questions affecting the American nation:

“With the past, so far as all present interests of humanity are concerned, should be buried all questions, once real but not now vital, having to do with the right of secession, with slavery, with the unsavory record of reconstruction, with the suspicion and doubt of post-bellum alienation. Practical business judgment decides powerfully and positively against the resurrection of the settled issues of a dead past. They have interest historically in enabling the man of affairs and the student of social conditions to ascertain present facts, but, to the mind of the American patriot, have no further popular function and require no discussion.”

The battle-cry of the Conference became, “A common school education for the children of all the people,” and the meetings resolved themselves into a committee of the whole to discuss ways and means by which this colossal undertaking might be carried to completion. The task is still unfinished; but the impetus given to it by this Conference and by the numerous agencies which it has assisted or set in motion has already produced changes without parallel in our educational history, and will in the end accomplish the desired result.

Events and activities of all sorts paved the way for the Athens meeting in 1902, in which year enthusiasm for the “Ogden Movement” was at the flood. Never

did the "Ogden Special" carry a more distinguished company; never was the trip through the South longer or more interesting. It has been spoken of as "the progress of a King of Friendship." In cities en route, the party was met with carriages, escorted to the chief places of interest, entertained at teas or luncheons, and showered with flowers. At some stations the school children assembled and sang a welcome to Mr. Ogden—"the children's friend."

Athens—the one-hundred-year-old university town with its wide avenues, delightful old homes with colonnades of tall white pillars, surrounded by large gardens—what recollections the name conjures up of wonderful Southern hospitality from people full of kindness and charm! They gave up their best rooms; they loaded their tables with delicacies; they anticipated every wish of their guests.

Mr. Ogden was a notable presiding officer, alert and quick, but having great dignity and poise. His face beamed with light, illumining his extremely forceful personality. Those who accompanied him on his Southern trips remember with an inward chuckle the reflections, asides, and comments which his sense of humor prompted him to make, and they remember, too, how his great tender heart was touched by the pathos of any human-interest story.

## TRIBUTES OF SOUTHERNERS TO ROBERT CURTIS OGDEN

You have had the wisdom to plan, the courage to attempt, and the energy to execute a great and noble enterprise whose benefits are so widespread and far-reaching that they cannot be calculated or measured.—*David H. Greer.*

Back and forth you have knit the comradeships that have given to individual effort the confidence and the social power of a common cause.

Your instrument of service has been, not money nor rare executive capacity—though you have given both—but friendship; a friendship highminded, loyal, and transparently sincere.—*Edgar Gardner Murphy.*

The great movement of which Mr. Robert C. Ogden is the acknowledged leader is unique in the annals of philanthropy, in that it is not intended to found an institution as a monument, to promulgate an idea, or to exploit a system.—*John W. Fries.*

I hail you as a tireless worker for men, a gentle diplomat of peace, a mediator between the best in sections

long estranged but no longer, a man of the world and yet to do its work, a stout friend of all good causes.—*Edwin A. Alderman.*

Mr. Ogden opened long vistas and disclosed large visions to his faithful followers. He stimulated Southern thought; built up Southern character; and fired Southern men to the most patriotic endeavor.—*Walter H. Page.*

Robert C. Ogden, with his broad vision, genial nature, and ready wit, was the President and the soul of the Conference, and won the hearts of us all. I remember how, when, to relieve the strain of a long session, he asked the audience to stand and sing "America" and some one asked why might not the windows be raised to let in the air, Mr. Ogden replied, "The air is in the song of course," and so it was, and is.—*P. P. Claxton.*

On one occasion I called at his office when he was very busy and a great many people were trying to see him. Being admitted to his private office I realized what it meant for so busy a man as he to see me; and, noting that he did not manifest the slightest impatience, although my call was of no possible business significance, I could not refrain from emphasizing my appreciation, and I strongly apologized for interrupting him in the midst of his busy hours, expressing my regret at the same time that it was necessary for me to intrude upon



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PROPOSED OGDEN MEMORIAL BUILDING

Ludlow & Peabody, architects



him. In his rare, kindly toned voice he urged me to desist, and would not accept my apology, saying that, on the contrary, the debt was his, that he should thank me for calling with my story and with information about the improvement of conditions among my people in the South. He insisted that such a report was of distinct value to him in keeping alive and stimulating his missionary interest in those who needed sympathy and help. His manner and words at this time impressed me profoundly and gave me new hope, and a new and ennobled idea as to the human impulses of the Christian business man.—*S. G. Atkins.*

## ROBERT CURTIS OGDEN AN UNOFFICIAL STATESMAN

It was my high privilege and great pleasure to know Mr. Ogden and have more or less personal association with him from 1876 on to the time of his death—a period of nearly forty years. I was attracted by his buoyant personality and was always thrilled by the enthusiasm he aroused among the large company of Sunday-school teachers and scholars under his leadership.

I had known General Armstrong and was interested in the work at Hampton, and I soon discovered Mr. Ogden's heart was deeply enlisted in that great educational experiment. My association with Mr. Ogden as a trustee at Hampton began in 1884. All these years of close association revealed to me more and more the unusually noble qualities of undaunted energy and persistence and faith with a unique humility that never dimmed the enthusiasm of Robert C. Ogden. His presence was always an inspiration to students and teachers and visitors. Mr. Ogden organized, in the early years of Hampton, annual visits of selected parties, which showed his original quality of mind. These visits



of representative men and women are undoubtedly one of the factors in the ever-deepening appreciation of the work of Hampton which has made it notable among schools of any character.

The beautiful personal friendship which existed between General Armstrong and Mr. Ogden was in itself an inspiring lesson of comradeship. The quality of personality, which is the great glory of human nature, was beautifully marked in the life and character of Mr. Ogden. His was a personality that had the splendid quality of being able to express itself freely and strongly to groups of men and women as well as to individuals. He had also the quality of drawing out by his beautiful consideration and reverent regard for all, young and old, the best that was in those who were his companions for the time. There are many scores of men and women among the finest of our country's folk who will never forget hours dominated by his personal equation, which were made remarkable in addition by the brilliant scintillations drawn forth from others present by his comradeship and notable social qualities. His long life experience, reaching back to Army life in the Civil War and through varied experiences as a merchant in both New York and Philadelphia, his never-failing church activity and Sunday-school work and unnumbered services as trustee of organizations of most varied character, prepared him for the position of unique leadership in educational evolution which made him a most prominent figure in the advance movements

in education which have signalized the twentieth century.

It was my good fortune to be of the company invited to Capon Springs, of which Mr. Ogden was so prominent a member. The discussions at that conference indicated to all the great possibilities from a nation-wide coöperation in dealing with the special problems in education which confronted the South. It was Mr. Ogden's strong and confident imagination which energized the company to believe that the time had come for widening and strengthening the thought which had been the fruitful result of the Capon Springs conferences. Many thousands throughout the South who were not able to be at Winston-Salem, Athens, Knoxville, Birmingham, Little Rock, Richmond, Nashville, and other places which gave hospitable welcome to the Conference of Education in the South, have followed the impetus of that great movement and undoubtedly countless thousands in coming years are to derive benefit from the enthusiasm generated at these conferences. The Southern Education Board was constituted by Mr. Ogden by direction of the Conference held at Winston-Salem. The men thus brought together by Mr. Ogden, some of whom had not before known each other, were exceptional from many points of view, and the work accomplished by this Board with the small income of \$30,000 a year through a dozen years may well be cited as one of the most extraordinary movements in history. The statistics gathered by the Exec-

utive Committee under the direction of President Alderman and Dr. Claxton, now United States Commissioner of Education, and their associates, were a revelation to the whole country. It was discovered that the universal poverty of the South following the unlimited disasters which war brings, and continues in its trail for generations, had so reduced the productive capacity of the population that the whole Southland had been able to give only eighty-three days of schooling to the average man of twenty-one years and over in the South at the beginning of this century. It was found that in one of the states of the South the average product per capita of the men employed in farming—owners, tenants, and hired men—was less than \$200 per annum. This against an average of \$1,100 in the State of Iowa. Mr. Ogden is entitled to much of the credit for the evidence that this was not sufficient economic basis for a proper educational system.

The General Education Board was organized about this time, and undoubtedly the unique work of the Southern Education Board under Mr. Ogden's leadership was an important factor in defining the lines on which the General Education Board was organized. In fact, its first work was directed to the study of the problem of education in the South, and the first million dollars given to it was for that work. Mr. Ogden was one of the first members of this Board and was always faithful and self-sacrificing of his personal comfort and even health in giving his services on its call. The

increase of money annually devoted to education in the South from all sources by fifty million dollars during the first ten years of the life of the Southern Education Board undoubtedly resulted in part from the inspiration and arousing of the people which the statistical and campaign work of the Southern Education Board gave. This work resulted in the coining of a new designation of the work of a modern publicist; and it is undoubtedly true that when one reads to-day of "Unofficial Statesmanship" there arises before the minds of those who knew him, and also of others who did not have that good fortune, the splendid figure and noble head and the frank, outlooking gaze with the modest and friendly greeting of Robert Curtis Ogden.

It is probably true that no one man has done so much personal work in bringing about an interweaving of minds and intermingling of hearts of men and women of the North and men and women of the South as this true believer in all men, who had faith in the real unification of the country and in the sure result of patience in well doing. All hail to this true Statesman!

GEORGE FOSTER PEABODY.

## A MASTER OF MEN

I was in New York attending a Board meeting one day about the time Mr. Ogden moved from Philadelphia to New York and opened the new Wanamaker store. I overheard some one say, "New York has received a great addition to her moral and religious strength in the coming to this city of Mr. Robert C. Ogden." That chance remark regarding a man theretofore unknown to me made a deep impression on my mind. I do not recall who said it; I only know that he knew his man.

I first met Mr. Ogden a few days after he invited me to become a member of the Southern Education Board in the summer of 1901. From that day until the day of his death he was my friend.

Mr. Ogden was a recognized leader in that great movement for better education in the Southern States, which has received such large recognition and appreciation in later years. It would be difficult to enumerate his manifold contributions to that movement. I think his chief contribution lay in the fact that he brought men of like mind and purpose together, and enabled them to know and understand one another. These

men of the Southern States, thus brought together, inaugurated and directed what I believe to be the most significant movement in public education which our country has ever seen.

Mr. Ogden was imposing in figure, benign of countenance, with a voice of rare power and resonance; he was a statesman in the best sense of that term, an orator of great power, and a "master of men." No one ever met him without at once believing in him and trusting him. He was a successful merchant, a man of vision and foresight, with a wealth of acquaintance and experience, all of which he brought to bear on that leadership for which we all honor him. He gave liberally of his money and made his gifts more valuable by the greater gift of himself. He was modest but did not lack courage; he effaced himself, but at the proper time and place he had the quality of magnificent self-assertion.

Other men and other agencies have done large things for education in the Southern States, but to Robert C. Ogden should be accorded the position of Field Marshal.

April 26, 1916.

WALLACE BUTTRICK.

MR. ROBERT C. OGDEN—AS A PATRIOT

The Patriot—for his Country—is called to do or die,  
'Midst the *noise*—and smoke—and fury of the fray,  
While this calls for manly courage, there's a different  
kind of Patriot,  
Who is recognized throughout our land to-day.

As a man of deep conviction, He with patience and with  
care,  
Had decided he was forced to take a stand,  
There was no blare of trumpets or friends to urge him  
on,  
As he studied every section of our land.

His task was all the harder, for the wounds of former  
strife

Were deep: it seemed as though they'd never, ever,  
heal—

Yet he counted all 'twould cost him—if he lost this  
final fight

'Gainst illiteracy, that all the South was made to feel.

Some few there were quite certain that the effort made  
would fail,

That the Conference could not hold the forces long;



Yet under his direction, there were gathered from the  
Nation  
Men of thought and action—big, and bold, and strong.

As, from year to year, they gathered, and his plans  
they all considered,  
They forgot their lack of knowledge in the past,  
For the Nation was before them, and to fit it for its  
future  
They must know no North or South nor East or West.  
—*H. E. Fries.*



MR. ROBERT C. OGDEN—AS A STATESMAN

Through the portals of our Nation  
He had seen the thousands coming  
From great cities and strange lands across the sea,  
And he thought of future ages,  
When these thousands, by slow stages,  
Might control our land predestined for the free.

He knew well the colored race  
Have with us a lasting place,  
And though once held back in bonds they now are free;  
To prepare them for their station,  
As a part of this great Nation,  
Was a task no human eye could well foresee.

Next in each and every portion  
Of our great and glorious land  
He sought for wise, and true, and noble men,  
Who would give their time or money,  
To consider every section,  
And to the weak, the greatest aid extend.

He, with others, oft was thinking,  
That this Nation has a mission  
To perform among the nations of the earth—

And to perform this mission  
We'll need men in every station,  
To melt and mold our men of foreign birth.

Already we are seeing  
The results of this right thinking,  
In the lives of studious maiden and of men:  
They should oft repeat the story,  
And to him give all the glory,  
As the "Unofficial Statesman"—that He's been.  
—*H. E. Fries.*

MR. ROBERT C. OGDEN—AS A CHRISTIAN  
GENTLEMAN

Through the years of early manhood  
He withstood each test and strain,  
While amid the trials of business  
He was found each year the same,  
Always battling for the right,  
Always bold, and fair, and square,  
He was modest and retiring,  
Yet impressed men everywhere.

Thousands came in daily contact  
With this man of gentle ways—  
Learned from him, that “true politeness”  
Always draws one, “always pays.”  
Yet he taught another lesson,  
Oft forgot along the way—  
That the God of Sabbath morning  
Is the God of every day.

He would seek the poor and helpless,  
Aid them through some other friend,  
Ne’er destroyed their independence,  
While his aid he’d gladly lend;

*All* in need, to him, were brethren,  
For he knew no Church or State,  
Once convinced that help was needed  
He'd ne'er stop or hesitate.

Glad we see a grand Memorial  
Built in honor of our friend;  
But *he* built his *own memorial*,  
It will last till time shall end.  
He will live through all the ages,  
In all portions of our land,  
Not as Statesman or as Patriot,  
But—as Christian Gentleman.

—*H. E. Fries.*

MR. ROBERT C. OGDEN—AS A MAN

Come! Gather the children and tell them a tale,  
A clear lighted story of heart and of vision,  
One of the present, of love and devotion,  
One that shines bright in its own clear precision;

The tale of a man full of vigor and strength,  
Who went *forth*, mid the darkness and light,  
And always you found him, where duty had called him,  
Arrayed for the *right*—in each fight.

'Midst carnage and strife and where cannon groaned  
forth,

'Midst straining and stress of each day,

'Midst worries of business and troubles of life  
He led men—and taught them—to pray.

In mingling with men he saw their great needs,  
He thought not of self but of others,  
He gave from his store, and gathered much more,  
Contending that all men are brothers.

A true man they found him in bright balmy youth,  
He kept faith with his friends later on,  
He rang true in business, in Church and in State,  
But *truest* and *best* in his home.

—H. E. Fries.











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